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Official Records

President: Mr. Kavan (Czech Republic)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 44 and agenda item 10 (continued)

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Report of the Secretary-General (A/57/270 and A/57/270/Corr.1)

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/57/1)

The President: Members will recall that the Secretary-General presented his report to the General Assembly at the 2nd plenary meeting, on 12 September 2002.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General to present his report on the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

The Secretary-General: Let met begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for giving me this opportunity to present to the Assembly the first of my annual reports on progress achieved by the United Nations system and Member States towards implementing the Millennium Declaration. I shall do so briefly, because I believe the report speaks for itself. In fact I cannot do better than repeat to you what I wrote in the concluding chapter:

"The record of the international community in the first two years of implementing the Millennium Declaration is, at best, mixed. Some

Millennium goals have benefited from the hard decisions and courageous reforms that are needed. Others have not. In the remaining 13 years, progress must be made on a much broader front. Otherwise, the ringing words of the Declaration will serve only as grim reminders of human needs neglected and promises unmet." (A/57/270, para. 113)

At a time when grave decisions have to be taken about threats to international peace and security, and the best way to deal with them, some of us may be tempted to put the broader and longer-term agenda of the Millennium Declaration on the back burner. I implore you to resist that temptation. Nothing, indeed, could be more contrary to the spirit of the United Nations and its Charter, in which the goal of saving future generations from the scourge of war is so closely linked to that of promoting social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

The United Nations must be able to confront immediate threats to peace and security without slackening its efforts on behalf of those who struggle to survive on less than \$1 a day, without clean water or sanitation, and go to bed hungry every night.

We cannot afford to treat the Millennium Declaration as something to think about tomorrow, or whenever the pressure of business permits. Let us not forget that our heads of State or Government adopted it as an urgent agenda — a list of the things we cannot neglect and most urgently need to change if this new century is to be any better than the last.

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Yet at present we are falling short. What this report shows is that, if we carry on the way we are, most of the pledges made in the Declaration are not going to be fulfilled.

On all our broad objectives — human rights, democracy, good governance, the resolution of conflicts and the special needs of Africa — we are moving too slowly. Unless we can speed things up dramatically, we shall find when we get to 2015 that the words of the Declaration ring hollow.

On progress towards the Millennium Development Goals — the targets which are most precise, and therefore easiest to measure — there are marked differences between regions.

Over the past decade, East Asia has already halved the proportion of people living on \$1 or less per day — from 28 per cent to 14 per cent. South Asia, where nearly half the world's poor still live, has seen a more modest drop, from 44 per cent to 37 per cent.

But in Africa, where 10 years ago, 48 per cent of the people were living on \$1 a day or less, the figure today is 47 per cent. In 10 years, Africa has managed to cut the proportion only by one forty-eighth. There will have to be a dramatic change if by 2015 — only just over 12 years from now — it is going to be cut by 50 per cent, as we have promised.

The first big test of the Millennium commitment will come in 2005 — little more than two years from now — by which time Member States hope to have achieved parity of girls and boys in primary and secondary schools. I regret to say that it is unlikely to be met. Between 1990 and 2000, the gender gap narrowed only by 25 per cent. And without greater success in placing more girls in school, I fear it will prove even more difficult to reach the other goals.

The Millennium Goals are global, but what will determine whether they are or are not met is what happens in each separate country. And there is no magic formula for reaching them that every country can apply. Each country must find the right mix of policies — one that suits its local conditions — and the people of each country must insist that those policies be applied.

Let no one think that this applies only to developing countries. The developed countries, too, must ensure that no part of their own population falls short of the Millennium Development Goals. And they

also have a special global responsibility. They must deliver what they have promised: to open their markets fully to the products of developing countries; to let them compete in the global market on fair terms; and to provide much more generous development assistance. Without these things, many developing countries will be unable to reach the Millennium Goals, however hard they try. In other words, it is not here at the United Nations or by the work of United Nations officials that these Goals can be achieved. They have to be achieved in each of the countries that are represented here, by the efforts of its Government and its people.

That is why I have started a millennium campaign to make the Goals better known throughout the world and to try and mobilize the force of public opinion behind them. I shall deliver my annual global report to the General Assembly each year, but I hope that every developing country, with the help of the United Nations and other international institutions, will also produce its own annual report so that, in each country, the people will know how they are doing. Our hope is that, in this age of democracy, once people know, they will insist on action.

With the Declaration, the road map, the Millennium Development Goals and the decisions taken this year in Monterrey and Johannesburg, we now have an impressive corpus of international commitments, all brought together in a single coherent vision on which all Member States agree.

This vision can become a reality only if all those who have a stake in it play their due part. As I have just said, the decisive action must be taken within and by each Member State, but the international community, and the United Nations in particular, also have an enormous collective stake in the outcome. We must all do our part to ensure that the necessary action really happens, and I personally am fully committed to do so.

This Assembly, which is the most authentic representative of the international community as a whole, has an especially important role to play and, here and now, an important procedural decision to take. Let me urge representatives to follow this process with vigour, but also in an integrated fashion. The Millennium Declaration has given us a big picture. We must not allow that picture to be fragmented and dealt with piecemeal by different processes in different committees. We need to keep the whole of it firmly in

view. Mr. President, I leave that important issue in your capable hands.

Statement by the President

The President: Today, we open our first joint debate on two very important agenda items: the work of the Organization and the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit. Let me first express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for his introduction of both reports and especially for his determination to pursue the goals of the Millennium Declaration. Both reports are comprehensive yet concise, and provide a very good basis for our deliberations.

More than ever, the call for multilateralism in the maintenance of international peace and security resonates through the Organization. The joint concentration of Member States on the fight against international terrorism produced some results throughout the past year. It is necessary, however, to commit ourselves to further strengthening the United Nations legal framework, including a renewed effort to negotiate the comprehensive convention against terrorism.

Despite some positive developments, we have witnessed growing tensions and the escalation of conflicts in many parts of the world. To be more effective in the area of peacekeeping, we must continue to implement its reform measures, including enhancing rapid deployment capabilities, taking action on lessons learned and generating sufficient resources, to name just a few.

Our efforts should, however, first and foremost concentrate on preventing conflicts before they arise. The recently increased attention to the concept of prevention of armed conflict is therefore proper. The United Nations can contribute through effective and timely use of the existing preventive tools, such as early warning systems, mediation and political guidance, good offices, fact-finding and goodwill missions, or preventive deployment and disarmament.

Equally important are policy advice and development cooperation in the areas that are crucial for conflict prevention, such as good governance, capacity-building and poverty eradication. I believe that the resumption of the work, on the initiative of the General Assembly, in drafting the draft resolution on conflict prevention will ensure that this topic remains

high on the agenda of the current session. I do hope that, during our presidency, we will be able to reach a consensus on that important draft resolution. We will definitely not spare our energy to achieve this goal.

During the fifty-seventh session, I am particularly determined to devote special attention to the issue of the coordinated and integrated follow-up of the outcomes of the major United Nations international conferences of the past decade, especially the Millennium Summit and the Monterrey and Johannesburg summits. I am convinced that such an approach will yield a positive and effective input to a more coherent and relevant review of the implementation of those conferences. In this respect, I rely on Members' support and active participation in the work of the plenary and Main Committees that will result in a synergy of different views to formulate a holistic approach to the follow-up of the conferences.

Allow me to add a few comments on the report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. The report provides a good overview of the accomplishments and shortcomings on the road towards attaining the millennium goals. The report concludes that sufficient progress has been achieved in a few countries only and that prospects for meeting the Millennium Development Goals are, at best, mixed. I hope that our debate will help us to identify gaps and to formulate strategies for the future, as spelled out in the resolution 55/162.

The Millennium Development Goals became the basis of the economic and social policy of the United Nations and international development cooperation. Their implementation must remain our top priority. Now, with the first report on the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration presented, it is time to engage ourselves in the search for the most effective approach in the follow-up mechanism, formulating a set of requirements for the monitoring and review of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals to ensure due results at the due time.

We have to keep in mind that the credibility of the United Nations is based not only on its ability to articulate political goals but also — and primarily — on its ability to mobilize the political will for their implementation.

Mr. Manis (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is our pleasure to thank Secretary-General Kofi Annan for

having responded to General Assembly resolutions by issuing these two important reports (A/57/1 and A/57/270 and A/57/270/Corr.1) to set out for Member States the vision, and status of the implementation, of declared commitments.

The international community and the peoples of the world celebrated the Assembly's adoption of the Millennium Declaration at the end of 2000. It was a unique and historic event setting out goals and approaches. It outlined how we were to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century, such as economic and social underdevelopment, extreme poverty, deadly diseases such as AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, and other important challenges to international peace and security such as terrorism, organized crime and armed conflicts. The Declaration also called for necessary attention to be given to the very important issue of the reform of the Organization, which is the principal mechanism for carrying out the activities, efforts and programmes of the international community in the interest of its peoples.

One of the most important and needed reforms — and on which tangible progress has not been made since the Millennium Summit — is Security Council reform, including the expansion of its permanent and non-permanent membership in order to make the Council more representative of the United Nations membership. The Council's working methods should also be reformed in order to make Council resolutions more democratic and transparent. It is regrettable to note that the Working Group on Security Council reform has held meetings since January 1994 without making any significant progress.

The challenge facing us today is to turn globalization into a positive force and to use information technology in the service of development. However, we note that the gap between the countries of the North and of the South is continually widening and that the ongoing digital divide reflects the utter failure of international and regional policies in the fields of development cooperation and assistance. In spite of the many international conferences held, in particular the Monterrey and Johannesburg conferences, the gap between the rich and the poor is still widening. We urgently need to establish an international economic system that is more democratic and just and which grants poor countries preferential conditions for trade with rich countries, in addition to an increase in official

development assistance and external debt relief for poor countries.

We would like to welcome the purely African initiative of the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the General Assembly's decision, taken last month, to support it. We also welcome the final review of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, which should lead to a willingness on the part of the international community to assist the African continent, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions.

The social and economic situation of the least developed countries requires that the international community give special and serious attention to those countries in order to help them defeat poverty, hunger and disease. In that respect, we call for the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action.

We would like to draw attention to the Assembly's decision to establish the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States as a follow-up mechanism to implement the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries. We hope that the High Representative will receive the support he needs to carry out his duties.

Measures to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations require our full attention and support. In this regard, we welcome the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the United Nations system through an agenda for further change. We support that report (A/57/387) and the ideas and initiatives that it contains to better enable the Organization to effectively face new challenges and to respond to the aspirations of all peoples.

We pay tribute to the success achieved by United Nations peacekeeping operations in Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste and Afghanistan. We welcome the substantial cooperation and coordination between the Organization and other relevant bodies. We look forward to the report that the Secretary-General has promised on the introduction of programme and institutional improvements to make the Millennium Declaration an instrument that is real, easy to implement and that achieves concrete results.

We agree with the Secretary-General that fundamental human rights, economic, social and

cultural rights and basic freedoms form an integral whole. Human rights can be realized only through the elimination of poverty and the improvement of economies. In that regard, we affirm our rejection of selectivity, double standards and the politicization of human rights issues. We call for providing the resources necessary to enable countries to deal with their problems without prior conditions or ulterior motives. We welcome the outcome of the Durban Conference against Racism. We hope that the report of the Secretary-General, through the necessary financing, will lead to tangible results.

We value the quick United Nations response to the events of 11 September 2001 and the adoption of decisive resolutions to combat international terrorism. After devoting an entire week to consideration of that issue, the General Assembly adopted resolution 56/1 by consensus. The Counter-Terrorism Committee was established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). The international community has responded expeditiously to all calls to combat terrorism, but many States have also called for an international conference to be held to define terrorism and to distinguish between terrorism and the legitimate rights of peoples to self-defence in confronting external aggression. Sudan has condemned terrorism in all its forms and has cooperated with all international efforts to combat it. We have ratified 11 relevant conventions, and we look forward to a definition of terrorism that will help us achieve all United Nations initiatives.

Mr. De Rivero (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Secretary-General for the reports we have received.

We share the Secretary-General's mixed feelings about the Organization's achievements and the current world situation. Indeed, during the past year, we noted with satisfaction important progress in the fight against international impunity with the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC). There has also been progress in landmine eradication and in the fight against terrorism, the Security Council having established a committee on that issue. There has also been progress in humanitarian assistance and a better organized effort to cope with natural disasters. But, like the Secretary-General, we also believe that much remains to be done to achieve a world free of threats, violence and poverty.

The Secretary-General reminds us of the deep disparity that exists between the logic of disarmament

and the logic of development. Worldwide, \$839 billion is spent annually on military expenditures, while official development assistance amounts to only \$51 billion a year. The international community could eliminate the \$70 billion deficit in financing the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 just by reducing annual military expenditures by less than 10 per cent.

In our view, that situation is an aberration. The major threats to international security today are generated by the asymmetrical conflict created by international terrorism, transnational crime and drug trafficking. Similarly, world stability is continuously threatened by extreme poverty, environmental deterioration, global warming and the economic stagnation of the majority of the countries referred to as developing countries; in the past decade only 17 such countries have achieved growth of 5 per cent, which is the minimum expected to reduce poverty. Sometimes we wonder why most of the countries of this Organization are referred to as developing countries when they are not developing; they continue to be underdeveloped. Therefore, controlling that problem should be one of the main goals of this Organization.

Similarly, we believe that the situation will not be corrected by increasing military budgets, nuclear systems and sophisticated conventional weapons. That is unrealistic. Not exempt from this appraisal are the underdeveloped States, which maintain disproportionately large armies and become mired in arms races, though they are faced with virtually non-existent prospects of war. Many such countries shirk their most basic responsibilities to guarantee democratic, free and just societies.

For those reasons, Peru has reduced its military budget by 20 per cent and has been promoting concrete initiatives in South America aimed at addressing that reality, such as the recent adoption of the Andean Charter for Peace and Security and the creation of a South American zone of peace and cooperation, by which we propose to reduce military expenditures in order to redirect them to the fight against poverty and social development. There is also the initiative to negotiate a reduction in the number of missiles in Latin America, as well as to strengthen confidence-building measures and transparency mechanisms in Latin America

In Peru's view, that type of initiative, which we hope can be reproduced in other regions, is fully in keeping with the creation of a culture of peace and what is called structural prevention, based specifically on the need to resolve political, economic and social factors that contribute to the emergence of violent conflicts.

The great development challenge we face is to create societies where democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, social solidarity and individual prosperity prevail. Latin America has made great progress in consolidating democracy and the rule of law. However, it faces a very critical economic and social situation today. As the reports of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank point out, our region not only has the lowest economic growth rates of all regions of the world, it is also faced with an ongoing systemic and financial crisis.

That situation not only threatens to spread and aggravate poverty in the countries of Latin America, it also threatens to erode our effort to attain the Millennium Development Goals. Worse still is that the situation is also eroding democratic governance, while our citizens call for concrete results in the economic and social fields from democratic Governments. We must, therefore, understand that strong democratic governance requires economic strength and stability, and the only way to address growing social demands, unemployment and acute poverty is through healthy growth, with social equity among our economies.

Therefore, the time has come to find a way to finance the defence of democratic governance. For that reason, Peru has proposed to the international community in various forums the need to create innovative financing mechanisms that will enable us to strengthen democratic governance. We need to establish international mechanisms that will enable us to close the gap between social demands faced by democratic Governments, particularly demands that call on society to produce concrete results for people's well-being. Results will be seen later through the economic policies pursued that encourage investment, trade and the development of our markets. What is at issue specifically is defending the enormous efforts achieved in building democracy and macroeconomic stability. We have thus asked the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean to prepare a study about possible mechanisms of a new architecture for the international financial system in

order to support democratic governance. The United Nations Development Programme is also examining future measures to that end. We hope that the next report of the Secretary-General will include innovative ideas on this crucial issue faced by Latin America.

I wish to conclude by expressing the firm conviction of Peru that the strengthening of the United Nations and the effective performance of its functions are fundamental in seeking cooperative responses to international crises and problems. Consequently, we support the appeal of the Secretary-General to continue strengthening multilateralism as the sole strategic option in the endeavours of States.

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein): In presenting his report (A/57/1) on the work of the Organization on 12 September, the Secretary-General made a strong appeal for multilateralism. That might seem surprising before an audience that should epitomize the spirit of multilateralism. But while the international community indeed rallied in a forceful and unprecedented manner to respond to the attacks of 11 September, the promise contained in our coming together quickly faded and was replaced by old patterns of confrontation and unilateral action. To our mind, the rule of law has become a predominant theme over the past few months. This Organization, and the Security Council in particular, is challenged to live up to its role as the guardian of the rule of law.

The ongoing controversy surrounding the International Criminal Court took on an unfortunate new dimension when the Security Council adopted its resolution 1422 (2002) last summer. We remain convinced that the functions and powers of the Security Council do not encompass the competence to alter or interpret international treaties. We are also concerned that such action outside the mandate given by the Charter could weaken the political credibility of the Council in the long run.

Given that the Council acts on behalf of the entire membership, and in the light of the enormous challenges it is facing, the legitimacy and thus the political credibility of the Council are of the utmost importance. I would like to reiterate at this juncture that my Government remains fully committed to preserving the integrity of the Rome Statute which entered into force on 1 July.

The international rule of law is in particular at stake when it comes to the use of armed force. While

the discussions of the past few weeks have been cause for some concern, they still made one thing abundantly clear. The legitimacy provided by a decision of the Security Council is unique indeed, and that legitimacy is necessary to ensure that armed intervention, where inevitable, enjoys the support of the international community as a whole.

Implementation, of course, is the other element that is decisive for credibility. Resolutions of the Council are legally binding on all Member States, and the implementation of all Council decisions must be ensured. In this context, the use of armed force should be considered only as a last resort in cases where non-compliance clearly poses a threat to international peace and security.

Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) is the central element of the quick and determined response of the United Nations to the threat posed by international terrorism. The work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee illustrates in many ways how the United Nations works at its best and how the rule of law is essential to guarantee human security.

That same rule of law must also prevail in our dealing with individuals suspected of involvement in terrorist activities. Basic standards of human rights, which constitute one of the great achievements of the United Nations, have to be observed at all times. It would be a grave mistake to treat human rights, a "bedrock requirement for the realization of the Charter's vision" (A/57/387, para. 45), to quote the Secretary-General, as a luxury which we can afford during good times and dispense with in times of crisis such as those created by international terrorism. Rather, they constitute the foundation upon which our actions must be based.

My remarks so far have focused on the Security Council because its activities during the past year have had such a strong impact. But much of what I have said leads me to conclude that this body, the General Assembly, has to play a stronger role. We are therefore satisfied to see that both the new reform proposals of the Secretary-General — an agenda for further change (A/57/387) — and the priorities for your term in office, Mr. President, contain a call for a stronger General Assembly. The implementation of the Millennium Declaration offers an ideal opportunity for the General Assembly to assert its place as the only universal organ of the United Nations.

We hope that the United Nations is about to enter an era of implementation and application of the agreed standards and goals, many of which are a result of the major conferences of the past decade. We do indeed feel the "summit fatigue" (A/57/357, para. 24) mentioned by the Secretary-General in his reform report. The standards are clear. Ambitious goals have been set, and our work should now focus on implementation.

The Millennium Development Goals must constitute the centre of our efforts in that respect. The road map given to us by the Secretary-General offers clear guidance for the implementation process which, after the conferences of Monterrey and Johannesburg, which were complementary in many respects, must be tackled with renewed vigour and political will.

We appreciate the overview on progress achieved given to us by the Secretary-General, in particular the emphasis placed on the two themes designated for this year: conflict prevention and the prevention of major diseases. On conflict prevention, it is not too surprising to note that the necessary change of mindset has not yet taken place, and that political and material support for preventive efforts has not been very forthcoming. Since the change from response to prevention constitutes a true paradigm shift, and given the often elusive character of preventive efforts, it will only be after a learning process that prevention will take its rightful place as foreseen in the Charter of the Organization. We will continue to give our full political support to the efforts of the Secretary-General to create a culture of prevention.

In the area of fighting diseases, HIV/AIDS continues to be at the forefront of our concerns, and the information available does not indicate a reversal of trends since the adoption of the Declaration of Commitment last year (resolution S-26/2). The special session on HIV/AIDS was a good example of how the quick succession of major United Nations meetings can have a negative impact on follow-up and implementation activities. The Declaration of Commitment is a bold text and would constitute an efficient tool to combat the pandemic if applied and implemented at the national and international levels. We therefore hope that the General Assembly will devote special attention to the follow-up activities, especially since 2003 is already the first target year contained in the Declaration.

The Millennium Development Goals are visionary and are subject to a lengthy process. We must ensure that our record on implementation is very soon more positive than mixed at best.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I should like to express my sincere thanks to the Secretary-General for the report on the Organization's activities (A/57/1) as well as his report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration (A/57/270), adopted in September 2000 by the United Nations. While the former report provides an accounting of what has been undertaken in the various areas of the Organization's activity during the past year, the latter endeavours to recount the progress achieved and the problems encountered over the past two years in implementing the commitments undertaken under the various chapters of the Millennium Declaration. It is therefore evident that both reports are linked in terms of their contents, which justifies their being considered in the same debate.

Clearly, the breadth and the diversity of the Organization's activities — which both of the reports present in exhaustive detail — and the limited time that has been accorded us for today's debate do not permit us to address in detail all the activities undertaken by the Organization in the past year. Since we will soon have the opportunity to consider some extremely important points before the Assembly — such as those touching on the reforms of the Organization and the revitalization of the Assembly — I shall confine my comments to certain areas of the Organization's activities that are of major importance to my delegation.

With regard to peace and security, the tragic events of 11 September have given new impetus to the Organization's anti-terrorism activities aimed at giving effect to concerted measures to fight terrorism, in conformity with the commitments undertaken by States Members in the Millennium Declaration. However, while one welcomes the international community's awakening to the dangers that terrorism represents for humanity as a transnational phenomenon and as a threat to international peace and security — as well as to the measures taken by the General Assembly and the Security Council to prevent and to combat terrorism — it is still true that much remains to be done. I am speaking here of concrete actions to eradicate that devastating scourge.

The United Nations must, first of all, pursue its efforts to urge Member States to ratify the 12 international conventions against terrorism and to finalize the negotiations on the two draft conventions, in particular the draft comprehensive convention against terrorism. We also hope that the General Assembly, at the level of both the Third Committee and the Fifth Committee, can adopt during this session the proposals of the Secretary-General contained in his report (A/57/152) dated 2 July 2002 on strengthening the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the Secretariat. Finally, subregional, regional and international anti-terrorism cooperation — to which all States say they are attached — should become a tangible reality so that the States that face terrorism have at their disposal the necessary means to combat it.

Now more than ever, the United Nations needs increased capacity and means to realize its potential for conflict prevention. Experience has shown that the effective and swift prevention of conflicts is clearly more effective and less costly for the Organization in human and financial terms than peacekeeping or peace-building operations. We subscribe to the idea expressed by the Secretary-General that

“the international conflict management system can and must invest in capacities for structural and operational prevention at all levels, from local to national, from regional to international” (A/57/270, para. 32)

While it is true that success in conflict prevention is difficult to measure, that does not make such success any less important. The events of 11 September reminded us of that reality in a brutal and tragic way.

In the area of peacekeeping, the United Nations has benefited in the past two years from an extremely important contribution of financial, human and logistical resources. First of all, the scale of assessments for the peacekeeping operations budget was reformed in December 2000, making it possible to meet financing needs, which reached a volume unprecedented in the Organization's history — nearly \$2.8 billion — in the past budgetary year. Then, in the context of the Brahimi report (A/55/305), the management and planning capacities of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations were strengthened with the creation of more than 200 new posts. And finally, last June the General Assembly approved the implementation of the concept of strategic deployment

stocks, enabling the Secretariat to set up a reserve of stores to support a complex mission at the United Nations Logistics Base in Brindisi, Italy, for the rapid deployment of a mission within 30 to 90 days.

Nevertheless, we continue to think that harmonious and orderly implementation of the recommendations of the Brahimi report, and those of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, essentially requires establishing better coordination among the various actors and increasing the effectiveness of the planning and management of peacekeeping operations by recruiting highly qualified personnel, including for missions in the field. It is also essential to strengthen United Nations assistance to regional organs so that they can fulfil their responsibilities, particularly with regard to conflict prevention and peacekeeping in their respective geographic spheres. In that connection, we hope that the envisaged revision and redefinition of cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union will give new impetus to the collaboration between those organizations.

The wide scope of the humanitarian problems generated by situations of war or natural disaster that today affect vast regions of the world — in particular numerous developing countries — shows that it is indispensable and urgent that we strengthen the means available to the United Nations to react swiftly and effectively, with a view to ensuring that we meet the vital needs of civilian populations, particularly vulnerable persons such as women and children. In Africa, persistent humanitarian crises linked to conflict, famine, natural disasters, especially drought, and the spread of infectious diseases, particularly HIV/AIDS, challenge the human conscience and require effective measures to be taken at the level of the United Nations system with a view to finding a lasting solution. So that it may play its full role in the humanitarian area, the United Nations must put in place mechanisms to coordinate aid among the various humanitarian bodies and institutions, which then must act in partnership to negotiate access, to mobilize resources and to furnish common services, such as aerial transport and communications.

Furthermore, although it is true that it is up to the concerned countries themselves to tackle problems related to internally displaced populations, it is no less necessary that policies and mechanisms agreed upon by intergovernmental organs be established at the United

Nations level to help address, in a concerted manner and at the request of concerned States, the problems of displaced civilians, whose growing number — more than 50 million worldwide in 2001 — is becoming increasingly disturbing. Despite the improvement seen in 2001 after the repatriation of 700,000 refugees to their countries of origin, the refugee situation remains worrisome — particularly in Africa, which still has more than 5 million refugees. The situation is even more disturbing in the light of the acts of violence and sexual exploitation committed against women and children by humanitarian personnel or by members of peacekeeping missions, particularly in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in West Africa — serious allegations that are currently the subject of an investigation by the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

Turning to the field of international economic cooperation, we vest great hope in the effective implementation of the commitments undertaken at the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development, the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development and the DOHA Ministerial Conference in order to overcome those obstacles that stand in the way of economic growth and sustainable development of the developing countries, and thus to achieve the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly to halve, by 2015, poverty and famine throughout the world.

This is the context of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative, which aims to set Africa on the way to sustainable development and to integrate it into the global economy. That being so, the support of the international community and in particular of the United Nations system is more than ever necessary for the success of this initiative, which was launched by the Africans themselves, and also to respond to the specific needs of Africa as set out in the Millennium Declaration.

In order effectively to implement NEPAD, it is essential to adapt United Nations programmes to the NEPAD approach, to promote intersectoral coherence and to bring about, under the authority of the Chief Executives Board for Coordination, enhanced coordination between the agencies and bodies of the United Nations system in order to share tasks and avoid duplication and overlapping.

Thus we attach particular importance to the upcoming regional meeting of the United Nations

institutions, to be held at Addis Ababa, particularly in terms of dealing with certain weaknesses and shortcomings in matters of coordination. We would like also to see some account taken of the recommendation of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, which was approved by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session last July, emphasizing the need for the United Nations system to define a strategic operational framework that will provide support for the implementation of NEPAD — a framework that should identify problems, spell out objectives, define the role to be played by the various organizations, set out resource needs and, finally, introduce achievement indicators.

The modest results of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, as set out in the annual report of the Secretary-General, should encourage States Members of the United Nations to redouble their efforts to give significant impetus particularly to those activities connected with priority areas in which little progress, unfortunately, has been made. It is our hope that the breakthroughs that have been seen in certain fields will be consolidated by 2005, and that, when the Secretary-General presents his overall five-year report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, further success will have been achieved under all of the headings of the Declaration.

Mr. McIvor (New Zealand): Sir, let me first offer my delegation's congratulations on your election as President of the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly. We look forward to working with you over the coming months.

My delegation will address particularly the second item in this joint debate — that is, the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization. Before doing so, however, I would like to comment briefly on one of the key issues identified in the follow-up to the Millennium Summit.

The challenge of humanitarian intervention has long been on the agenda of the United Nations. We welcome the report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, entitled "The responsibility to protect". That report addresses some of the questions surrounding humanitarian intervention and sovereignty posed by the Secretary-General in his Millennium address. We encourage further debate and dialogue on the ideas expressed in the report.

The onus to rise to the challenges set forth by the Secretary-General and encapsulated in "The responsibility to protect" rests also with the Security Council. It is unfortunate that the power of the veto continues to undermine the ability of this Organization effectively to respond to humanitarian situations and to maintain international peace and security.

The Secretary-General's report provides a useful account of the Organization's activities during the past year. It highlights the major challenges faced, of which there were many. It was a year that — perhaps more than ever before — demonstrated the unique value of multilateral action through the United Nations. Collective action is needed, whether the challenge is to respond to a major threat to global security and stability, or to combat poverty and promote sustainable development. The issues are complex and interrelated. We fully endorse the Secretary-General's view, as set out in paragraph 4 of his report, that "all nations stand to benefit from the constructive change that multilateralism makes possible".

The value of an annual report is in providing an analytical account of recent developments that identifies the major issues for an Organization in working towards its key goals. As a stakeholder in this Organization, we look for something more than a historic record — rather, a strategic overview that can help us provide direction and advice to the Organization on the best way forward.

The benefits of such an approach are picked up by the Secretary-General in his latest initiative to strengthen the United Nations. He sees the report on the work of the Organization as the precursor to a more forward-looking report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. Together these documents would form the annual report of the United Nations — learning from what has happened in the past year and applying those lessons to the challenges ahead. We support this proposal to rationalize reporting and indeed wonder whether it might not be possible to take the further step and combine the two reports in a single document. This would also have the advantage of focusing this debate on achieving the Millennium Goals as central to the business of the United Nations. In this regard, the Secretary-General has just provided us with a frank and disturbing assessment of the lack of progress towards these goals.

We are not seeking change for change's sake. As the Secretary-General has said, his goal is to enhance the coherence of analysis by the Secretariat and to encourage Member States to address related issues in an integrated way. This will allow us to maximize the policy relevance and impact of our deliberations. We fully endorse this approach.

The 2002 report is comprehensive, and we would comment on a few aspects only.

The Secretary-General rightly highlights the successful conclusion of the transitional administration of East Timor. On 20 May this year we witnessed the birth of a new nation. Recently, that nation took its rightful place in the membership of this Organization. We have commented elsewhere on the role of the United Nations in the process. Let me just say here that we have learned the importance of an international response that is timely and flexible. In a remarkably short time frame, the United Nations has had to provide a diverse range of assistance. We welcome the continued engagement of the United Nations through the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISSET) in the knowledge that there is still much work to be done.

There is also progress in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea. The United Nations Political Office usefully complemented the work of the regional "coalition of the willing" Peace Monitoring Group and has played an important role in weapons disposal. As I speak, the second, bulk containment phase of the weapons-disposal process is scheduled to be nearing completion. The commitment shown by the parties lays a solid foundation for future peace in Bougainville. My Government is confident that the new Government of Papua New Guinea, led by Sir Michael Somare, will continue to support the peace process in Bougainville. We call on Francis Ona, the leader of the Me'ekamui Defence Force, to seize the opportunity to play his part in the history of Bougainville, for the future of all its people, and join the peace process as it moves to completion. If current progress is maintained, the election of an autonomous Bougainville Government should be possible within the next 12 months.

The international intervention in Afghanistan has been perhaps the most comprehensive of its kind. With security provided by International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), the Security Council approved a mandate for the United Nations operation, United

Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) that included humanitarian, recovery, political, governance and peace-building elements. This acknowledges the fact that complex situations require complex solutions.

We have been pleased with developments in the peacekeeping area, including improved consultation between the Security Council and troop-contributing countries. It is encouraging to note that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has set itself a small number of strategic goals and that significant progress has been made in enhancing rapid deployment capability, especially with the United Nations Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS) for personnel. New Zealand was pleased to formalize its commitment to UNSAS this year with the Prime Minister signing a Memorandum of Understanding. We would encourage other States to support the United Nations in this regard. We also note that the strategic deployment stocks in the logistics base at Brindisi are being enhanced. New Zealand over the last few years has made a substantial contribution to the peacekeeping mission in East Timor. We will continue to play our part in supporting United Nations peacekeeping efforts within our available resources and capabilities.

The past year has witnessed the rejuvenation of global commitment to sustainable development. The International Conference on Financing for Development brought about a remarkable consensus on the need for global action to address development issues through adequate financing, people-centred development, policy reforms and the involvement of all relevant stakeholders.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development reiterated the importance of sustainability in the holistic process of development and our shared responsibilities in this regard. WSSD saw the establishment of important objectives on water and sanitation, oceans, energy, natural resources, biodiversity, health, and the addressing of regional concerns, including those of the Pacific island States. It upheld universal social objectives and the determination to eradicate poverty. It offered fresh ideas on the roles of the United Nations agencies, including the streamlining of the Commission on Sustainable Development. Coupled with the Millennium Development Goals, Monterrey and Johannesburg have left the United Nations and its Member States with a clear road map for global

progress. The challenge now, is to ensure effective implementation of those undertakings. New Zealand looks forward to working with the international community to achieve that.

The Secretary-General's report notes that work has begun on further reform of the Organization. We welcome his initiative to further strengthen the United Nations and believe that his proposals, if fully adopted and implemented, could substantially improve the Organization. We will address his proposals in more detail under the relevant item.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China): The Chinese delegation wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his reports on the work of the Organization and on the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The two reports cover the progress made in all major areas of work and deserve serious consideration by Member States. Here, I would like to make the following comments in the light of these reports.

First, even as mankind has entered into the twenty-first century, we are still faced with severe challenges in safeguarding world peace. In the Middle East, the vicious cycle of violence between Israel and Palestine has not stopped. In Iraq, the danger of war breaking out exists. If it should happen, the already turbulent situation in that region would become more complex. The situation in the South Asia subcontinent is also worrying. In spite of the fact that different degrees of progress have been made in reaching political settlement in some regional conflicts in Africa, peace and stability have not prevailed. While the international struggle against terrorism has reaped first fruits, tasks to eliminate the root causes are onerous and the road is long.

The international community should have a sober understanding of the threats that face the current peace situation. It must deal with all kinds of problems, new and old, with renewed thinking and methods in the light of emerging novel situations and problems and prepare to face numerous complicated security challenges with multiple means, such as political, economic, scientific and technological and cultural means. It must also always attach importance to ensuring that the United Nations plays a central role in international peace and security.

Secondly, the prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems

and the eventual elimination of those weapons are crucial for maintaining and enhancing international peace and security. The full participation of and close cooperation among all States is a prerequisite for the success of international non-proliferation efforts. In this regard, we should give full play to the role of the United Nations and other international organizations. China has always been firmly opposed to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and has taken concrete actions in this regard. Recently, the Chinese Government promulgated regulations on export control of missiles and missile-related items and technologies, and the missiles and missile-related items and technologies export control list. Moreover, the Chinese Government will promulgate in the near future administrative rules on export control of chemical items and related equipment and technologies, and regulations on export control of biological dual-use items and related equipment and technologies. With the promulgation of the above-mentioned regulations, China will establish a comprehensive system of export controls over sensitive items covering the nuclear, biological, and chemical and missile fields.

China supports the full implementation of the thirteen nuclear disarmament steps contained in the Final Document of the 2000 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference on the premise of maintaining global strategic stability and undiminished security for all countries. China welcomes the new treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation on the reduction of strategic offensive forces, and hopes that the United States and Russia, as the countries with the largest nuclear arsenals and bearing special and primary responsibilities for nuclear disarmament, will continue to drastically reduce and destroy their nuclear weapons in a verifiable and irreversible way.

China is of the view that the Conference on Disarmament should at an early date re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space and start substantive work with a view to negotiating and concluding an international legal instrument that would prevent the weaponization of and the creation of an arms race in outer space. The goal is to prevent outer space from becoming a new battlefield.

Thirdly, over the past year, the United Nations has sponsored a series of important conferences, including the International Conference on Financing

for Development and World Summit for Sustainable Development, during which the Monterrey Consensus was forged and the Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Implementation were adopted. These were of great significance for promoting the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. However, efforts in implementing those goals are very unbalanced. Much of sub-Saharan Africa and large parts of Central Asia are hardly advancing, and some even falling back in poverty-reduction. Some parts of Latin America are also slow in this area. Based on the current trend, it will be very difficult for the developing countries to achieve the objective of halving the poverty rate by 2015.

In order to meet the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations and the international community should take more active measures to increase the investment of resources. At present, it is of utmost importance to do the following: first, developed countries ought to open their markets to developing countries, expedite their implementation of commitments in debt-reduction and enable official development assistance to reach a percentage of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product, so as to enable practical solutions to issues of finance and technology that are necessary for meeting the development goals.

Secondly, we advocate promoting a balanced and steady development of economic globalization, reforming the current rules in the world economy and strengthening the guidance and management of the globalization process.

Thirdly, there should be a strengthening of developing countries' capacity for self-development. The international community should respect the right of the developing countries to choose a development path suited to their own national conditions and provide them with assistance in areas such as institution-building, personnel training and competitiveness development.

Fourthly, the international community should continue to promote sustainable development and a balanced development of the economy, population, resources and environment, with a view to achieving appropriate integration of economic return, social well-being and environmental benefits. The international community should also endeavour to combine the efforts to address environmental problems of individual countries with their efforts to tackle global concerns.

Multilateralism has become the main theme of the current session of the General Assembly. Most Member States support the remarks made by the Secretary-General, to the effect that multilateralism, with the United Nations as its centre, is needed by all nations in order to meet global challenges successfully.

Experience has shown that, as the most universal and representative inter-governmental Organization, the United Nations has an irreplaceable role to play in safeguarding peace, promoting development, enhancing anti-terrorism cooperation and helping to solve global problems, such as mass movements of refugees, HIV/AIDS, overpopulation and environmental degradation.

Recently, the Secretary-General submitted a report entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387). This report deserves serious study by Member States. China will, as always, actively support and participate in the United Nations reform process.

Mr. De Alba (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We have received with interest the first annual report on the progress made by the United Nations system and Member States in the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. There is no doubt that these reports and the five-year report are essential in order to provide concise monitoring of the fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals.

However, I must note our concern that, in the first two years since the adoption of the Declaration, progress in the fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals and the broader and cross-cutting goals, such as the maintenance of international peace and security, disarmament, human rights, democracy, good governance and attention to the specific needs of Africa, have been very uneven.

The results of this report should be taken as an early warning sign regarding the need to pool our efforts and resources at the national, regional and international levels, in order to remedy these disparities, if we wish to reach the Millennium Development Goals by the year 2015, as we committed ourselves to doing.

It should be recalled that these goals are not new. Rather, they sum up the commitments undertaken in several world conferences held during the 1990s.

Failure to meet them would render the United Nations Organization irrelevant.

The development goals range from the eradication of poverty and hunger to the fight against infectious disease and the reduction of infant and maternal mortality. The report makes it clear that advances made in recent years in the developing countries conceal, in general, a much more fragmented reality. The figures as a whole do not reflect the enormous disparities that exist between the regions that make up the developing world and between the countries within a single region, with East Asia and the Pacific at one extreme, and a large part of sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia at the other.

The present slowdown of the world economy is a factor that certainly was not foreseen when the Millennium Declaration was adopted and thus renders the pursuit of its Goals more difficult. This slowdown is affecting all countries in the world inasmuch as globalization links all economies, directly or indirectly; but, above all, it makes more remote the possibility that the poorest countries and developing countries, which, due to their geographical situation, may be at an additional disadvantage — as is the case of small island States and landlocked States — would be able to reach the Millennium Goals.

The Monterrey consensus recognized the primary responsibility of each country for its own economic and social development. At the same time, it recognized the link of national economies to the global economic system and the fact that the success of national development efforts depends not only on Governments' adopting appropriate policies, but also to a great extent on their having a favourable international environment.

Direct foreign investment, international trade, sustainable financing of external debt, official development assistance and greater coherence and coordination of the monetary, financial and international trade systems are basic instruments to ensure that the efforts of developing countries can bear fruit.

This linkage between national economies and the world economic system means that the only way to approach the problems of development is through broad strategic alliances, conceived between Governments, international institutions and civil society, including, especially, the private sector. This

was clearly embodied in the Millennium Declaration and in the summits that have been held since that time, such as the Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg conferences.

A sustainable environment is another of the Millennium Development Goals, in which, although there has been some progress, there have also been significant setbacks. We are moving away from this goal when we allow, among other things, continued deforestation and dependency on fossil fuels. The consequences of global warming could more seriously affect the poorer regions, which are those least to blame for the problem. Therefore, the report makes an appeal, endorsed by Mexico, that developed countries should lend assistance to those developing countries most vulnerable to climate change, so that they can adapt in the best possible way to its effects on their economies. It is clear that what is required is greater cooperation between the industrialized and the developing countries, since we are dealing with shared responsibility. But, above all, we are dealing with a particular responsibility — that of the developed countries — inasmuch as they have contributed to the greater extent to the deterioration of the environment.

Among threats to international peace and security, certainly terrorism is in the foreground. This subject has received special attention over the past year, stemming from the tragic events in the United States on 11 September 2001. We, United Nations Member States, have shown solidarity and collective responsibility in our response to these attacks. However, we must not lose sight of the fact that terrorism is not the only threat to international peace and security and that in order to confront it more effectively it is necessary to attack its causes.

Similarly, it is essential to bear in mind that we must take special care to fully respect human rights in the fight against terrorism.

We are also concerned about the fact that the inconclusive results in promoting democratic systems, good governance and respect for human rights in general show insignificant progress. The most recent *Human Development Report* confirms the fact that the link between democracy, the rule of law and human development constitutes an essential principle for political stability. It is also therefore essential for peace, transparency in public administration, the political participation of our populations and the

overall well-being of our peoples. Democracy could be imperiled if the principles and policies that national Governments committed themselves to implement when they adopted democratic systems were to be ignored in the management of the international economic system. The same will be true if measures are not adopted to counteract the negative impact of the global economic downturn and that of globalization in developing countries.

Ms. Tan (Singapore): We congratulate the Secretary-General for his thoughtful and balanced reports on the work of the Organization and the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. They are concise and analytical accounts of the work of the United Nations over the past year. It is particularly commendable that the Secretary-General not only focused on the successes, but also highlighted the problems that need to be addressed.

When this agenda item was debated last year, we observed with regret that the Secretary-General could not report on the performance of the board of directors of the United Nations, that is, the Member States of the General Assembly. We also suggested that it was possible that some of the legislative processes within the United Nations might have become dysfunctional.

In his seminal work, *Swords Into Ploughshares*, Inis Claud, Jr., observed the following about the General Assembly:

"The Assembly's central position in the administrative system of the Organization, typified by its electoral, budgetary and supervisory powers, makes it the institutional hub of the United Nations. Thus the evolution of constitutional relationships within the United Nations system has tended to make the General Assembly the unrivalled principal organ of the entire system."

In fact, Mr. Claud expressed concern about the increasing role of the General Assembly at the expense of the Security Council. That was in 1956, when the book was first published. How does that compare with the situation today? The Secretary-General noted in his report entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" that

"The General Assembly is the only universal forum in which all States have an equal voice. Through its power to consider and approve

the budget, the Assembly has a great deal of authority for the effective functioning of the United Nations. Yet, many Member States consider that the Assembly's contribution to the Organization's work is diminishing, and I share their concern." (A/57/387, para. 15)

The prestige of the United Nations balances on a tripod made of three equally important legs: the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Secretariat. The award of the centennial Nobel Peace Prize to the United Nations and the Secretary-General last year is a clear recognition that the United Nations has done some things right. The Secretariat has undergone a period of significant reforms through the institutional process and programme improvements implemented by the Secretary-General since 1997. It has now emerged leaner and fitter, even though it is being asked to do more within unchanging budgets.

A lot more could be done to improve the Security Council's accountability, transparency and willingness and ability to act in a timely manner in situations affecting international peace and security. But some noteworthy and substantive progress has been made to its working methods. Many of those developments are outlined in the report prepared by the Secretariat and circulated as document S/2002/603, dated 6 June 2002. Those improvements are also noted by the Secretary-General in his report on the strengthening of the United Nations.

(Mr. Bouallay (Bahrain), Vice-President, took the Chair.)

In comparison, the General Assembly is increasingly seen as the weakest link of that tripod. The media have little or no interest in the statements delivered. There is a perception that the General Assembly is saddled with an ever-expanding laundry list of issues, many of which are repetitive and have been on the agenda for years. In fact, issues that are clearly within the prerogative of the General Assembly are increasingly being raised in the Security Council, where the chances of catching media and public attention are greatly enhanced. Examples include HIV/AIDS and the protection and promotion of the rights of women and children.

Incidentally, it is interesting to note that although the General Assembly comes before the Security Council in the ordering of the Chapters in the Charter of the United Nations, in the United Nations daily

Journal Security Council meetings are always presented before General Assembly meetings.

We are in a paradoxical situation. We are all agreed on the importance of revitalizing the General Assembly. During the general debate, three weeks ago, nearly all delegations cited revitalizing the General Assembly as an important priority. However, despite several successive rounds of reform, the pervasive assessment is that we have not done enough. Many resolutions have been passed on revitalization since the forty-sixth session. Many of the ideas put forward have been on the table for quite a long time. What we really need is the will to implement them and to change the status quo.

All that is not to say that there have not been recent improvements to the General Assembly. The Secretary-General said in his report on the Millennium Declaration that the innovations endorsed by the General Assembly in response to his 97 reports on renewing the United Nations and on the Brahimi report had enabled the Organization to act with greater unity of purpose, coherence of efforts and agility. But those are not sufficient. Several permanent representatives and other representatives observed that the General Assembly that they knew from, say, 20 years ago, was the hub of United Nations activities. The debates in the plenary Hall were lively and interesting. Lively and interesting debates are not ends in themselves. But the deep somnolence that characterizes our debates now cannot be desirable.

The General Assembly is clearly overburdened with an ever-expanding agenda. Worse still, we have continued with our old working methods, rituals and habits — resulting in repetitious statements and exhausting negotiations. The truly worrisome aspect of it all is that the energies expended are often not commensurate with the outcomes achieved. The result is exhausted representatives, dissipated energies, dissatisfactory implementation of agreed goals and a disinterested public, with consequent impacts on follow-up. The Secretary-General made similar observations in his reports on the strengthening of the United Nations.

Under the leadership of the President's predecessors we have made some progress towards managing agenda items more efficiently through clustering and spacing out of the frequency at which issues appear on the agenda of the General Assembly.

We are already benefiting from this, and the work programme for this year's plenary meetings is much improved. We are particularly pleased that in his statement at the opening of the fifty-seventh session, the President announced his intention to hold panel discussions and informal consultations on issues of common interest, as well as to streamline the General Assembly agenda.

The Millennium Declaration, agreed to by our leaders, clearly sets out priorities including precise and time-bound goals. The Secretary-General's proposed road map to implement the Millennium Declaration provides a good basis for the work of the General Assembly. During his press conference on the fifth progress report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, the Secretary-General reported that the world was falling short in meeting the Millennium Goals. The achievement of many of those goals depends on actions taken at the national level.

It is also very important that the General Assembly align its activities with the Goals.

It is also very important that the General Assembly align its activities with the Goals. The many draft resolutions we deliberate on and adopt in the General Assembly must be streamlined with a view to achieving those Goals in the most expeditious way. There have been good examples of proactive action taken by some committees. Last year, for example, the Second Committee agreed to defer discussions on several key issues since they were already being negotiated in the context of the preparations for the International Conference on Financing for Development. We understand that the Second Committee is currently in the midst of examining its working methods in order to implement effectively the outcomes of recent high-level summits and meetings such as the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Social Development. All such practices are highly commendable and should be actively considered.

We fully support the views expressed by the Secretary-General in the concluding paragraphs of the report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration that efforts to revitalize the General Assembly must continue if the Organization is to assume in full the responsibilities entrusted to it by the Charter. We are all aware of the problems facing the General Assembly. We need to intensify our efforts to

rationalize its agenda, working methods and procedures. The General Assembly is an intergovernmental body, and only Governments can ensure that it is able to effectively play its role as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations. A tripod is a simple yet remarkably stable and ingenious piece of engineering equipment. A tripod needs all of its three legs to be equally strong. We have a critical need to fortify the third leg — the General Assembly — in order to ensure for the United Nations a position of strength and stability.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): Let me begin by complimenting the Secretary-General on his introduction to the report before us on implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

The Millennium Declaration has given new priorities and a new direction to the Organization and its Member States. Each country must choose a strategy to achieve the goals that we have set collectively. The important issue is, however, that the Millennium Development Goals be reached within the agreed time limits. The international community and multilateral and bilateral donors must ensure that their efforts to assist in this endeavour are based on national poverty-reduction strategies. This will ensure both national ownership and a coordinated approach.

The prospects for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, based on current trends, are decidedly mixed, with marked differences between and within regions. This can to some extent be explained by the different approaches chosen by countries to meet specific goals.

The Secretary-General has made it clear in his report, that the world is falling short in meeting the objectives that world leaders agreed on two years ago in the Millennium Declaration. Let this be a timely warning to us all. Those in need and "We the people" — our constituencies — will not understand why we have made so little progress on the road to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

The Secretary-General is also cautioning that insufficient progress is being made in meeting the broader objectives in the Declaration on issues such as human rights, democracy and good governance, conflict resolution, and the special needs of Africa.

My Government is firmly convinced that there are clear links between peace and security, sustainable development in the broader sense and good governance and respect for human rights. Every country is responsible for its own development, and this includes the responsibility for creating national mechanisms for sharing political, social and economic goods and ensuring the protection of civil liberties and human rights — in other words, the responsibility to help build democracy. This is a crucial and universal responsibility that no Government can ignore, whether or not it is measured against the attainment of the development goals.

There is another, equally important, responsibility that also needs to be clearly highlighted. The same kind of solidarity and sharing that we are asking for at the national level from all of our partners has a universal and global parallel: it is called official development assistance, and it is a development tool of the first order. Official development assistance should, by any reasonable standard of solidarity, have reached at least 0.7 per cent of donors' gross national product a long time ago.

Preliminary estimates show that the funds needed to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals are at least equal to a doubling of the present level of official development assistance. It could well be much higher. Since we as donor countries now have specific commitments to meet and a better understanding of what it takes to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals, it is more than reasonable to expect renewed efforts to meet official development assistance commitments. It is also reasonable to expect improved market access for developing countries, reduced debt burden and other initiatives of equal importance to our partners in the developing countries.

This is also a question of meeting the scale of the challenges. It is no use emptying a few buckets of water onto a raging wildfire. Our most important fire-fighting equipment for achieving the Millennium Development Goals is hard cash. This is particularly true when it comes to reaching targets such as halving poverty, achieving universal primary education and reversing the spread of killer diseases.

Meeting the special needs of Africa is a challenge that in one way or another involves practically all the Millennium Development Goals. This is another challenge whose real magnitude must be viewed in the

context of the scale of the problems and met accordingly, by both the international community and the African countries themselves. My Government commends the African leaders on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) initiative and on their willingness to tackle their continent's diverse and difficult problems. It is our belief that this new policy will contribute to peace and security and the prevention of armed conflict, which is a prerequisite for sustainable development. The NEPAD initiative is a truly valuable one and is worthy of international support.

Better ways must be found to support and finance this and other national and regional initiatives, however. Since the Millennium Summit, we have taken on new commitments at Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg on trade, financing for development and sustainable development. We have also succeeded in creating new partnerships in those areas. These partnerships should be developed and better tailored to support initiatives like NEPAD. This is one way of advancing towards the universal attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. Given the sheer numbers and stark statistics of Africa, we have no option but to tackle Africa's urgent problems if we are to be anywhere near achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

This is particularly true when we consider the two issues highlighted in this year's report — the prevention of armed conflict and the treatment and prevention of major diseases, including the devastating HIV/AIDS pandemic. These are, of course, not specifically African issues, but their impact is felt more strongly on that continent than anywhere else.

The Millennium Declaration also has a bearing on the strengthening of the United Nations. My Government is a strong believer in multilateralism and international solidarity. We believe firmly that United Nations Member States have a responsibility to meet common challenges and to solve common problems.

We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's report "Strengthening the United Nations: an agenda for further change". It is necessary to focus the Organization's attention on achieving the Millennium Development Goals and on following up on the recent world conferences. We agree with the Secretary-General on the new priorities outlined in the report. All activities should be scrutinized for policy coherence to

ensure that the Millennium Development Goals are comprehensively addressed in the revised programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005.

Let me in conclusion also say that we welcome the start of a millennium campaign to make the millennium commitments better known throughout the world and to ensure that they are the focus of global action. We think that the emphasis on national reports, where all stakeholders can participate, is a brilliant idea. We highly appreciate the appointment of Ms. Eveline Herfkens, former Minister for Development Cooperation of the Netherlands, to advise and assist the Secretary-General in this regard.

Mr. Manalo (Philippines): I wish to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and substantive reports on the work of the Organization and the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration. In view of our limited time, however, I shall focus only on some issues raised in the report on the work of the Organization.

My delegation shares the Secretary-General's views on the continuing political, economic, environmental and technological challenges facing our world. Issues such as terrorism, mass refugee movements, HIV/AIDS, weapons of mass destruction, environmental degradation and pollution remain high on our agenda.

On conflict prevention, the efforts of the Secretary-General to move the United Nations from a culture of reaction to one of prevention should be supported. We continue to believe that conflict prevention remains the most efficient approach to the maintenance of international peace and security. However, it is important to note that conflict prevention should ultimately aim at addressing the root causes of potential conflicts and that conflict prevention measures of the United Nations should be undertaken in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter, taking into account the historical background and political milieu of each situation being addressed. We shall be guided by these principles when we return to the pending draft resolution on this item later in this session.

Peacekeeping remains a major task of this Organization. This past year proved to be one marked by relative success. In this regard, my delegation welcomes the conclusion of the Transitional Administration of East Timor. As a neighbour from the

South-East Asian region and having been an active participant in United Nations initiatives and peacekeeping operations in that country, the Philippines is pleased that the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste has emerged from adversity to become the newest Member of the United Nations.

After the horrors of 11 September, the issue of fighting terrorism has become a priority issue on our agenda. My Government has fully supported and continues to fully support the efforts of the United Nations to fight terrorism and we encourage the Secretary-General to assist Member States in complying effectively with Security Council resolution 1373 (2001). While the year under review witnessed an accelerated pace in the ratification of legal instruments on terrorism, manifesting vigilant global support for combating terrorism, much remains to be done.

We must also continue to work for the full implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Philippines is a party to these Treaties and ratified the Treaty on South-East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone, thus fulfilling our constitutional requirement of keeping the Philippines free from nuclear weapons. We also continue to support the convening of an international conference devoted to disarmament.

In the area of small arms, which is also cited in the report, the Philippines hosted a regional seminar on implementing the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, with the co-sponsorship of Canada last July, as a follow-up to the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The seminar, in which member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations, as well as China, Japan and the Republic of Korea participated, focused on the problems associated with the proliferation of small arms.

We concur with the Secretary-General's views on the alarming number of civilians who continue to be displaced either by natural disasters, armed conflict or cases of potential conflict. The deepening humanitarian crises in many parts of the world that have caused new waves of displacement are of great concern to many, including my Government. At the same time, as globalization progresses, more opportunities and

greater choices for people to travel the world in search of and finding a livelihood are being created. Their safety and welfare thus become of paramount importance. We therefore encourage Member States to become State parties to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, and to support the important work of humanitarian assistance agencies, such as the International Organization for Migration.

Propelled by economic differentials, internal political disorder, global networks of communication and transportation, and the political and economic constraints on the admission of migrants and refugees, the global nature of migration involving hundreds of millions of people requires that much higher priority be given to this issue in the United Nations system. As stated by the Secretary-General in his report on an agenda for further change, it is time we took a more comprehensive look at the various dimensions of the migration issue.

We are also pleased to note the Secretary-General's reference in his report to the link between the Monterrey Consensus on financing for development and a number of the core Millennium Development Goals. The most immediate and urgent task before us is to ensure that the Monterrey process enters its implementation stage by translating the Monterrey Consensus into concrete action measures. The follow-up to Monterrey is a priority issue on the agendas of both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

On the World Summit on Sustainable Development, we share the Secretary-General's view that the Summit has put us on a path that reduces poverty while protecting the environment. It is also important that the follow-up processes on financing for development and sustainable development complement each other.

The Philippine Government supports the United Nations commitment to African development priorities within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development and through the African Union. The Philippines has had a strong bond of friendship and solidarity with our brothers and sisters in Africa, with whom we share common concerns, values and aspirations. In terms of technical assistance, as stated by my Secretary of Foreign Affairs during the most recent general debate, the Philippines has held

preliminary discussions with donor countries for providing technical assistance to Africa, especially in capacity-building. He expressed confidence that these talks would bear fruit.

We are further pleased to note the Secretary-General's inclusion of the problem of HIV/AIDS as one of his priority areas. The Philippines continues to support the goals of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, especially on the need to involve civil society, individuals and organizations in combating the pandemic. We also join other Governments in continuing to lobby for the affordable and easily accessible treatment of HIV/AIDS.

My delegation also recognizes the need to promote equal opportunities for the elderly and for people with disabilities in order to develop their abilities and to integrate them into the mainstream of our societies. We urge the Secretary-General and Member States to give high priority to this issue.

The continuing efforts of the Secretary-General to strengthen the Organization are, indeed, welcome. In this regard, we find a number of the recommendations in his report entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations: an agenda for further change" (A/57/387) to be both necessary and timely. We will comment on them in more detail at the appropriate time during this session.

On the overall issue of United Nations reform, our priority continues to be the revitalization of our most universal forum, the General Assembly, both structurally and in terms of more meaningful and substantive interaction with the other principal United Nations organs. The Philippines therefore urges that we build upon last year's exercise, while, at the same time, begin to implement agreed measures aimed at strengthening the General Assembly. In this regard, the President of the General Assembly and Presidents of future sessions of the Assembly might wish to consider effective ways to implement those existing mandates, such as convening more informal and interactive debates on certain plenary items such as the present one on the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/57/1) and the report on the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration (A/57/270) or on the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly.

As suggested in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Strengthening of the United Nations:

an agenda for further change", we need a more coherent approach towards issues and our work in general. Perhaps that could be achieved by aligning the General Assembly agenda with the priorities of the Millennium Declaration and the decisions of recent global conferences, and by maintaining the flexibility to incorporate issues of immediate or urgent concern to the international community. This may not be as easy to accomplish as it sounds, but it is certainly worth a serious attempt on our part.

Mr. Listre (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): The presentation that the Secretary-General made on 12 September, on his report on the work of the Organization (A/57/1) and his report on implementing the Millennium Declaration (A/57/270) shared the common denominator of reaffirming multilateralism as a fundamental diplomatic tool for ensuring peace.

The lessons learned from the tragic events of the last century and the beginnings of the current century indicate that the grave problems we must face transcend national borders and that, as a consequence, they require coordinated solutions at the global level. The United Nations, because of its global mandate and universal representation, is the institution within which we must forge the agreements enabling humanity to advance together in overcoming the current challenges.

The two documents that we are examining on this occasion devote a substantial section to the question of peace and security. The Secretary-General notes that the grave events we are witnessing in various regions of the world are more akin to the state of anarchy depicted by Hobbes than to the noble aspirations embodied in the Millennium Declaration. We should study his words with the same seriousness which they embody and acknowledge that the construction of an order ensuring peace will always depend on the political will of States and on their readiness to abide by rules that have been agreed on collectively. All are bound by that requirement, but only the unwavering commitment of the most powerful can ensure that such an order works effectively.

The Secretary-General's call that we not wait for the outbreak of conflicts but, rather, that we work patiently for their prevention captures an essential aspect of the problem. A common will to direct human and material resources to that objective must be shown. That was possible in the recent past, when two successful preventive peacekeeping operations were

created, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force in Macedonia and the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic. We agree that the regional and subregional context is also decisive in adequately managing a conflict, and we encourage cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in discussing and exchanging experience on conflict prevention and the coordination of joint endeavours.

We have examined the work carried out by the various peacekeeping operations. We agree that, despite the persistence of other grave situations, there is cause for satisfaction. Timor-Leste's admission to the Organization is the result of its people's determined struggle for the recognition of their right to self-determination. It has also been seen that when there is the political will, a clear mandate, sufficient financial, logistic and human resources and an exit strategy, the United Nations can play a very constructive role that helps to lay the foundation for the political, social and economic development of a country. Another remarkable case is that of Sierra Leone, where the work of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone and the disarming of the combatants led to elections and the formation of a Government that must now lead the way to a lasting national recovery.

The grave situation of civilian populations in complex emergencies, who become the direct target of attacks and abuses of all types, is cause for concern. Almost two years ago, the Secretary-General called for finding ways to respond to those attacks while respecting the sovereignty of States.

At the invitation of the Canadian Government, Argentina has contributed to the preparation of a collective process of reflection, as described in the report presented by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty, entitled "The Responsibility to Protect". The report invites us to consider sovereignty — rather than as a right — as a responsibility to ensure the well-being of the population. My Government wishes to thank Canada for that initiative, which provided the basis for a process of reflection that cannot be postponed.

There is no doubt that, as is amply expressed in both reports, the brutal terrorist attack against the United States on 11 September of last year, in addition to being a criminal attack on its immediate victims, was an extraordinary challenge to everything that the

United Nations represents in terms of defending peace and human rights. We believe that since those tragic days, the international community has reacted in a concerted manner to suppress the financing, planning and execution of terrorist acts, as well as to make progress in the creation of binding legal instruments.

The categorical condemnation of terrorism cannot be qualified for any reason without risking a descent along a slippery slope of highly dubious ethics. However, it is true that behind the evil actions of terrorist groups often lies a profound malaise of the societies in which this phenomenon arises. That is why it is necessary to analyse the context in which terrorism emerges in order to attack its causes and to prevent its proliferation.

States that are weak or that have fallen into anarchy and disintegration are a source of international threats from which come global ills such as terrorism and trafficking in arms and drugs. The international community must not forget or underestimate the importance of the so-called forgotten conflicts, since we still have before us the example of what happened in Afghanistan under the Taliban.

We believe that poverty eradication and the need to achieve development for all, the key objectives of the Millennium Declaration, are priorities whose relationship to violence cannot be underestimated. We must focus great efforts to achieve development, given the bleak picture described by the documents, which indicate that the world is divided as never before between rich and poor.

The Monterrey Conference produced a broad Consensus on means for mobilizing resources to that end. We fervently hope that the commitments made will become a reality. Important pledges were made for development assistance that lead us towards the goal of contributing 0.7 per cent of the gross national product of developed countries, which only some have achieved.

There were also agreements reached there regarding free trade and access to markets. However, some events this year indicate that the principles of the free market, so strongly advocated by the developed countries, actually continue unapplied. Protectionism continues, and \$1 billion continue to be spent daily on agricultural subsidies, excluding the exports of developing countries from the market. It is essential that the Monterrey Consensus be implemented, that the

will for trade liberalization expressed at Doha not be thwarted and that negotiation within the context of the World Trade Organization be intensified. The price of failure would be very high, as the Millennium Development Goals would not be achieved and confidence in multilateral action would weaken, resulting in more conflicts and tension.

It has been rightly said that lack of respect for human rights and the absence of democracy are factors that intensify political and social tension. The United Nations has already achieved important work in promoting and protecting human rights at all levels. We believe that in that area the lack of confidence of those who see political motives behind every reference to human rights must be overcome. Bloc voting in multilateral forums, referred to by the Secretary-General in his report, serves no purpose in opposing how human rights violations are addressed, because it only evades a problem that will soon erupt resulting in serious repercussions. We must work together to ensure the full operability of the special procedures of the Commission on Human Rights, its system of communications and the committees established through international instruments in that domain.

The entry into force of the Statute of the International Criminal Court is an institutional advance that Argentina supports because it is aimed at putting an end to impunity and preventing genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Criminal Court will play an outstanding deterrent role in the prevention of future human rights abuses. It must also be strengthened and its substance must be supported.

Another important factor in the outbreak of conflicts can be found in the promotion of sustainable development. In that context, the Argentine Republic welcomes the work done by the United Nations and its specialized agencies in the process that led to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, recently held in Johannesburg, which identifies concrete actions for implementing the commitments made in Agenda 21 in the economic, social and environmental fields.

Argentina notes with satisfaction the contents of the report of the Secretary-General regarding the administration and management of the Organization. In that respect, my country firmly supports the development in the area of information technology, particularly the integrated management information system. That is undoubtedly an element that provides

great added value to the work of United Nations personnel. We also look forward to the reports concerning the capital master plan, particularly the proposals for agreements on financing it, which should be the subject of detailed discussion by the Fifth Committee.

The initiatives presented by the Secretary-General will strengthen the Organization in the area of administration and management, with a view to advancing the implementation of the objectives of the Millennium Declaration. Argentina pledges its participation in the consideration of that item by the Fifth Committee. We support the process of strengthening and reform of the United Nations now under way, and we shall speak in due course on that item when it comes before the Assembly. We agree with the Secretary-General that any reform of the United Nations will be incomplete without reform of the Security Council. We want and need a Council that is more transparent in its procedures, more democratic in its decision-making, more representative in its membership and more responsible.

Amid present difficulties, we do not want the words of the Millennium Declaration to serve in the future "as grim reminders of human needs neglected and promises unmet", as stated in the report on the implementation of the Declaration. Every State knows where its responsibilities lie, but only by through coordination will we be able to respond within a multilateral framework to the expectations in our countries that Members of the United Nations will be able to guarantee a future of peace, stability and progress.

Mr. Akinsanya (Nigeria): Let me begin by expressing appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for his report on the work of the Organization. The report, contained in document A/57/1, discussed some of the most pressing issues confronting humanity today, such as terrorism, conflicts, natural disasters, human rights questions, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, poverty and sustainable development. The report is, therefore, not only a review of the relentless efforts of the Secretary-General to seek constructive solutions to those fundamental problems; it is also recognition of the complexities of the tasks confronting our Organization.

While some success has, obviously, been achieved in resolving some conflicts across the globe, a

lot still needs to be done to usher in durable peace and stability to conflict-ravaged States. In that regard, Nigeria commends the continued efforts of the Secretary-General on his use of the tools of quiet diplomacy, fact-finding and confidence building missions, informal networks of eminent persons, mediation, conciliation and arbitration in the search for peace. To some extent, modest successes have been recorded in the area of conflict prevention, mediation and resolution. For example, the total number of armed conflicts is on the decline, and there has been a significant increase in the number of peace agreements, especially in Africa. The adoption of a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach to conflict prevention is, to our satisfaction, yielding good results.

In complying with the Millennium Declaration, regional organizations are strengthening their capacity in the area of maintaining international peace and security, through the establishment, with the assistance of the United Nations, of institutional arrangements for conflict prevention, management and resolution. In West Africa, for example, the establishment by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) of the Conflict Prevention, Resolution and Management mechanism, as well as complementary institutions, such as the Council of Elders and the Mano River Women's Peace Network, are efforts aimed at institutionalizing conflict prevention strategy in the sub-region. In this respect, the United Nations, in active collaboration with ECOWAS and Mano River Union countries, participated in addressing complex humanitarian, political and security situations affecting Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

We commend United Nations continued support of ECOWAS initiatives in the promotion of dialogue among these countries, in the belief that, without such dialogue, efforts to address the root causes of the sub-regions problems may not yield desired results. Nigeria therefore commends the establishment of the office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for West Africa as a demonstration of the United Nations commitment to work closely with regional organizations and member States in finding solutions to the problems within the region. In this regard, we urge financial and logistical support to regional and sub-regional organizations in order to enhance their effectiveness.

As the world marks the anniversary of the unfortunate events of 11 September 2001, Nigeria

reaffirms its unequivocal condemnation of all acts of terrorism, and its firm commitment to join all efforts within the United Nations and outside to combat this menace. We also pledge our cooperation with other members of the international community, through bilateral and multilateral efforts, to combat terrorism in all its manifestations. Nigeria condemns, in the strongest terms, all acts of terrorism and urge firm action by all Member States of the international community to fight this global phenomenon and to deny any support to terrorists and their cohorts.

At the Millennium Summit, our leaders resolved to eliminate weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, and to reduce the global risk posed by small arms, light weapons and landmines. The excessive accumulation, easy accessibility to, and availability of small and light weapons, hinder peace-building and development efforts and threaten human security. In this regard, Nigeria reaffirms its commitment to the Programme of Action adopted by the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in July 2001. We urge the international community to control the movement of these weapons, especially to non-State actors. We also call for the early elaboration of a legally binding international instrument to combat illegal trafficking in these arms.

With respect to landmines, Nigeria notes with satisfaction the success in the implementation of the 1999 Ottawa Convention. We observe that partnerships between the United Nations, Governments, non-governmental organizations and international organizations have resulted in progress on mine action, with a consequent decrease in the production and transfer of anti-personnel landmines. Nevertheless, landmines continue to impede the development and security of populations, especially in some African States emerging from conflicts. We should therefore strengthen our support for the United Nations mine action, as it is the only source of curbing the menace of landmines.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic continues to pose a grave challenge to our developmental efforts. We appreciate the efforts of the United Nations and the contribution of the international community in combating the HIV/AIDS scourge, particularly in Africa. Nigeria endorses the call by the Secretary General for a major new global campaign in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic. We also endorse the

Plan of Action adopted at the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Special Summit on AIDS, which underscored the commitment of African leaders to intensify their efforts and mobilize resources for prevention, care and treatment of people infected by the disease.

Nigeria commends the Secretary-General for the establishment of a Global Aids and Health Fund in order to mobilize sufficient funds necessary to address the AIDS pandemic. In spite of its own commitments, Nigeria has redeemed its pledge of contributing \$10 million to the Global Aids Fund.

We also recall that at the Millennium Declaration, our leaders resolved to eliminate poverty by launching a sustained campaign to make the right to development a reality for all. In order to reduce poverty and promote development, it is essential to achieve sustained and broad-based economic growth. The Millennium Development Goals highlighted priority areas that must be addressed, including commitments made by developed nations, such as increased official development assistance and improved market access for exports from developing countries. It is regrettable, however, that our development partners have yet to match their words with action on this matter of crucial importance for the achievement of the Millennium Goals.

The increasing level of poverty in developing countries, particularly in Africa, suggests that not much has been achieved with respect to increasing ODA and foreign direct investment flows to them, thereby constraining their ability to meet the targets of the Millennium Declaration on poverty eradication. If the international community must meet its goals of development and poverty eradication, conscious efforts must be made to accelerate economic growth in developing countries. Nigeria therefore urges Member States to ensure that Millennium Development Goals are incorporated into their national development plans, as they would help to increase the coherence of national policies and programmes.

With the establishment of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), African countries have accepted responsibility for their own social and economic development. We acknowledge the importance of sound national policies and good governance, as prerequisites for poverty reduction and sustained national growth. We therefore welcome the

fulsome recognition of the special needs of Africa, as contained in the Millennium Declaration, and the overwhelming support for NEPAD at the recent high-level debate of the General Assembly. Africa is poised to free itself from the throes of poverty, disease and under-development. We count on the support of the United Nations and the international community in the accomplishment of this goal.

The Charter of the United Nations and other sources of international law have established conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties can be maintained. We observe that the rule of law at the international level is becoming more widely accepted and States are increasingly employing treaties to regulate their relations. In this regard, we commend the establishment of the International Criminal Court, established by the Rome Statute. We believe that its creation will contribute significantly to compliance with international humanitarian law and respect of fundamental freedom.

In conclusion, Nigeria is pleased to note that the Secretary-General has made commendable efforts towards strengthening the effectiveness of the United Nations. We also note that the Secretary-General has taken various initiatives, and hope that this would help us achieve the Millennium Development Goals and reach the targets we have set for ourselves.

Mr. Andjaba (Namibia): The Secretary-General, in his address to the General Assembly, stressed the ever-increasing importance of multilateralism and the responsibility of Member States of the United Nations to uphold the principles embodied in the Charter of our Organization. For that, and for his reports on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and on the Work of the Organization, respectively, my delegation expresses its appreciation.

We live in a world where so many of its citizens are troubled. So many people have lost hope for the future. How much effort we put into realizing a more peaceful, prosperous and just world, in which all human beings can live better and safer lives, is the challenge we all face.

The Secretary-General tells us that the events of 11 September last year brought us closer to the situation of millions of people around the world for whom the world had long been dangerous. What we do, therefore, to avoid a reoccurrence should make

everywhere in the world a safe place for human beings. Terrorism thrives on fear and division; only through collective action can we combat that menace. The Secretary-General said it all when he pointed out that the causes and motivation of terrorism need to be analyzed in each specific context. Only then can our action be purpose- and goal-oriented. The overwhelming response to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) demonstrates the resolve of Member States to address this worldwide challenge. However, the considerable strain that it is putting on the limited capacities of developing countries to implement resolution 1373 (2001) need to be seriously addressed.

HIV/AIDS is spreading fast, and improving their access to drugs is slow and very painstaking for those in developing countries. It is estimated that, of the 28 million people infected with HIV/AIDS, 26 million are in sub-Saharan Africa. In the light of that grave situation, it is estimated that \$10 billion a year is needed to combat HIV/AIDS in developing countries, yet only a fraction of that has been secured. Meanwhile, global military spending stands at \$800 billion a year. That is not morally right, and something different must be done. What is needed is access to affordable drugs and to a preventive vaccine. The major criterion in resource distribution should be the impact of the disease.

Children orphaned by HIV/AIDS need immediate attention, because they are at high risk. Malaria and tuberculosis are also spreading. Therefore, any efforts to combat the spread of HIV/AIDS must focus on women and girls if we are to meet the Millennium Development Goals. Nowhere else is the problem of orphans and vulnerable children more rife than in rural areas in sub-Saharan Africa. Thus, the harmonization of policies among the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Food Programme and the International Fund for Agricultural Development with regard to the impact of HIV/AIDS, food security and rural poverty is a welcome development.

While progress is being made in some regions in the area of poverty eradication, on the whole, Africa continues to lag behind. The simple fact of life is that developing countries cannot escape the web of poverty through their own efforts alone. The feminization of poverty is on the increase and needs to be addressed. The efforts of the United Nations Development Fund for Women and of other United Nations agencies aimed

at helping women to improve their control over their economic assets need to be supported. If only the programmes of action agreed to at all major United Nations conferences could be implemented, then true partnership in eradicating poverty could be realized and progress could be made in halving poverty by 2015.

At this juncture, let me reiterate that there are acute food shortages in Southern Africa as a result of drought. We welcome the positive response to the United Nations appeal for Southern Africa. Natural disasters are recurrent, and the best way to address them is through an early-warning system. Food security in Africa needs to be addressed in the context of efforts to combat drought and desertification and acute water shortages.

The causes of conflict are multidimensional. We must do more in that area, and indeed we can prevent conflict from breaking out. We must invest more in conflict prevention. We concur with the Secretary-General that the capacity of States and of the United Nations needs to be bolstered. Regional organizations have a crucial role to play in that regard, and they need to be supported.

Just as the causes of conflict have many dimensions, so do its effects. As a country that emerged from a war of national liberation, we know too well the challenges posed by the reintegration of ex-combatants into society. That is a long-term programme dictated by specific conditions in each country. All parties to a conflict, the United Nations system and the international community as a whole have responsibility towards such people.

If we can strengthen the capacities of the United Nations funds and programmes in the vital area of nation-building, then we can accelerate the processes of peacemaking and peace-building. The long-standing cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union should be strengthened to complement mutual efforts towards conflict prevention and peace-building. In that context, efforts should be made to address the problems of the spread of small arms and light weapons in Africa. In situations of conflict, the major problem has often been lack of access to humanitarian assistance. It is estimated that in Angola, approximately 800,000 people have gained access to such assistance for the first time in many years.

After favourable conditions have been created, the problem then becomes one of low response to available humanitarian assistance. That needs to be addressed, because, besides their nutritional needs, the health of women and girls — especially their reproductive health — warrants assistance. The situation of children is particularly important. We welcome the National Immunization Days of UNICEF, and we call on the parties to any conflict to honour those humanitarian efforts. The delivery of humanitarian assistance comes at a high price for United Nations staff and for other humanitarian workers. The Inter-Agency Security Management Network should, therefore, be supported earnestly.

Never before in recent times had multilateralism been emphasized as it was during the general debate of the fifty-seventh session. The growing political, social and economic problems that we face in this interconnected world require such an emphasis. The United Nations is an imperfect institution, but there is no alternative to it. What we must do is to enable the Organization to meet effectively the demands that we continue to place upon it, so as to make this world a better place for all, as our leaders committed themselves to do in the Millennium Declaration.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to extend my thanks to the Secretary-General for the two very useful reports that we are considering today. We have studied them with interest, given the fact that they contain a clear presentation of the work of the Organization and of the progress made towards the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

Last year a new challenge to humankind emerged: the threat posed by international terrorism. As a consequence of the regrettable events of 11 September 2001, international recognition of the new gravity of this new challenge led to efforts on the part of the organs of the United Nations to confront this dangerous phenomenon. This has proved once again the pivotal role of the United Nations in addressing international problems and phenomena, particularly with respect to international terrorism, which does not recognize any border or belong to any religion or culture.

We reiterate once again our support for the efforts of the United Nations in combating international terrorism. We believe it must play a practical and pivotal role in this regard as an effective tool that

represents international will and legitimacy. Indeed, it has been successful in coordinating international efforts to suppress international terrorism.

Egypt believes that joint international efforts to achieve development should be based on the fact that this is a joint ethical, humanitarian and political responsibility on the part of the North and of the South. It is the best way to achieve prosperity for all and to maintain international peace and security. Egypt therefore calls for the strict implementation, in letter and spirit, of the decisions of the Millennium Summit and of other international conferences and summits.

History's final judgement will not be based on the good intentions and recommendations contained in political declarations, but on our success in implementing them. We noted with concern, in the report of the Secretary-General, the statistics on the implementation of international development goals and on the major disparities among different geographical regions, as well as the difficulties facing the African continent in achieving these goals.

In this connection, Egypt would like to emphasize that, in order to implement international development goals, the international community should have the political will to make resolute efforts to find a solution to the external debt problems of the developing countries; increase official development assistance to internationally agreed levels; liberalize the trade policies of industrialized countries, particularly in fields of interest to the States of the South, such as agriculture, textiles and clothing; address the issues of price instability of primary commodities and transfer of technology to developing countries and provide the necessary technical assistance to them.

Hence we call on the international community to follow up on the implementation of the commitments it has undertaken vis-à-vis the developing countries to complement their own efforts in that regard.

The commitments undertaken in the context of the Declaration's Development Goals are not only the responsibility of the developing countries, with their limited national resources; they are a joint responsibility that requires the efforts of developed and developing countries alike. It not enough, therefore, to refer only to the importance of various international development goals and international documents. Rather, these goals and the availability of funds to

implement them should be linked in keeping with the limited time frames.

International studies have indicated that achieving the goal set out in the Millennium Declaration of halving the number of people living in abject poverty in Africa by 2015 will require that the economy of that continent increase by at least 7 per cent annually. This will require closing a financing gap of \$64 billion a year. But how can the continent come up with this enormous amount of money in the context of its current financial and trade system? What is required at this stage is not simply to diagnose and describe poverty academically at round tables, but multilateral consideration. We are of the view, therefore, that the continuing unfavourable international economic conditions and the large decrease in United Nations resources earmarked for achieving its development goals and operational activities are issues that must be addressed.

This is the starting point for the channeling of the resources promised by the countries of the North at Monterrey and for achieving the goals and implementing the programmes of the Millennium Declaration and the commitments undertaken at Johannesburg. The United Nations should continue to play its pivotal role in elaborating the political framework for international development and should endeavour to harmonize and integrate international development policies.

The report of the Secretary-General makes clear the fact that the attempt to control the spread of infectious disease is absorbing most of the funds allocated to international development. The impact of those diseases is not confined to the enormous losses in terms of human life; it is also limiting the production capabilities and consequently the income of those States.

Development losses have a double impact in terms of their dimensions and their effects. It is difficult to speak of the economic consequences of infectious diseases, particularly AIDS, which affects more than 60 million people. A third as many have

died, and treatment is still difficult. All we can do is try our hardest to provide drugs for them that will curb the spread of the disease and enhance their immunity.

In this regard, the report states that the overwhelming majority of AIDS patients cannot afford these drugs. An incurable disease is a very sad thing. However, the fact that the drugs exist but cannot be acquired is psychologically destructive and ethically wrong.

We agree, therefore, with the Secretary-General's recommendation that there is a need for additional resources that exceed the current flows. We agree also with the call in the report to enhance the capacities of health-care institutions in the developing countries to help them deal with this disease.

The Organization's humanitarian efforts are of particular importance and should be supported at this difficult stage of humanity's history. There has been an increase in natural disasters and armed conflicts, which has led to the loss of many lives and the destruction of infrastructure. It has adversely affected development efforts in many countries, and has given rise to an unprecedented number of refugees and internally displaced persons.

We strongly condemn any violations perpetrated against civilians in time of war. We call on the international community to urge all States and parties to a conflict to respect the rights of civilians and not to sacrifice them to political or military ends. We emphasize the need for humanitarian assistance to reach these civilians. My country calls for applying the same standards in all cases, particularly since all the rules of international humanitarian law are binding on all States, whether big or small. In this connection, Egypt calls upon the international community to face up to the humanitarian emergency situation being experienced by the Palestinian people. This matter appeals to the international conscience, and will serve to provide this defenseless people with protection, as well as save the peace process in the Middle East.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.